

**REMARKS**

**General**

The present is in response to the Office Action dated December 1, 2006, where the Examiner has rejected Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16; objected to Claims 11 and 14; and withdrawn Claims 17-27. Accordingly, Claims 1-27 are pending in the present application. By this amendment, Claims 1 and 13 have been amended and Claims 11-12 and 14 have been canceled. Allowance of pending Claims 1-10, 13, 15 and 16 in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

**Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 are rejected by the Examiner.

Claims 11 and 14 are objected to by the Examiner.

Claims 17-27 have been withdrawn.

**By this amendment:**

Claims 1 and 13 have been amended.

Claims 11, 12 and 14 have been canceled.

**Response to rejection of Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or in the alternative §103(a)**

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or in the alternative 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over various references. Applicants respectfully contend that Claims 1-10, 13, 15 and 16 have either been canceled or rewritten to incorporate the limitations of original base Claim 1 and original Claim 11 or original Claim 13

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and original Claim 14. Thus, Applicants contend that the remaining Claims fully comply with 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

**Conclusion**

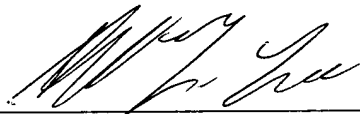
Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 are now in condition for allowance.

No Additional Fees for this response are necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

SPAWAR SYSTEMS CENTER SAN DIEGO  
OFFICE OF PATENT COUNSEL 20012

By



Allan Y. Lee  
Registration No. 43,744  
(619) 553-3818